Newton's law and King Neptune conspire to down London Bridge

The London Bridge arch . . . a great tourist drawcard in the area.

After the arch had dropped . . . tourists had just passed the danger section when down it came.

ENGINEERS may be called in to remodel areas of Victoria's spectacular south-west coastline after the collapse of the famous London Bridge arch.

The bridge, formed by erosion of the limestone coast about five million years ago, collapsed seconds after two tourists had crossed it on Monday evening.

"If we were another 30 seconds late, there was no way in the world anyone could have survived it," one of the tourists, 18-year-old Kelli Harrison, of Newcastle, said.

Engineering work to remodel other areas of the coastline, famed for its varied rock formations and cliffs, was among the options being considered, a Government spokeswoman said.

The future of what was left of the bridge after the 40-metre section collapsed would be decided after a soil expert and other technical officers from the Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands had inspected the damage.

Regular ranger patrols would also continue to monitor the stability of other sections of the Port Campbell coastline.

The bridge was cordoned off yesterday, and other areas might also have to be closed, the spokeswoman said.

"We can't foreshadow what will happen," she said.

The bridge is a key feature of the Port Campbell National Park, which attracts 350,000 tourists a year.

Local authorities warned of more danger along the coast.

"In view of what's happened, I would have thought that anywhere there are natural rock formations would have to be looked at very closely," Warrnambool Shire secretary Mr Alan Bowes said.

Mr Bowes said the whole stretch of coast was treacherous.

"I wonder sometimes whether people realise how dangerous it is," he said.

Monday's collapse stranded Ms Harrison and her cousin David Darrington, 28, of Townsville. They had to be rescued by helicopter.

Melbourne University geologist Mr Chris Wilson said it was unlikely there would be another similar incident.

"This was an arch that crashed into the sea as a result of natural weathering and deterioration," he said.